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This report contains recommendations for agencies concerned with the preparation and certification of professionals and the licensing of paraprofessionals to work with young children. People with leadership and supervisory skills are essential for college teaching, on-the-job supervision, and consultative services. Personnel on all levels should be trained to function as a team, and the concept of upward professional mobility should be part of the certification process. Preparation of professionals and paraprofessionals must be a joint effort carried out by educational and community agencies. Direct involvement with preschool children in community-based settings is recommended, for training should provide both knowledge of subject matter, and an understanding of young children. At all levels of teaching, certification should depend upon demonstrated competence, and criteria and procedures for evaluating competence should be established. Both training programs and certification requirements should be flexible enough to permit competent persons with limited training to begin working with children. There should be more than one route to certification and licensure based on competence rather than credits, and new approaches to inservice training for teachers should be designed. (DR)

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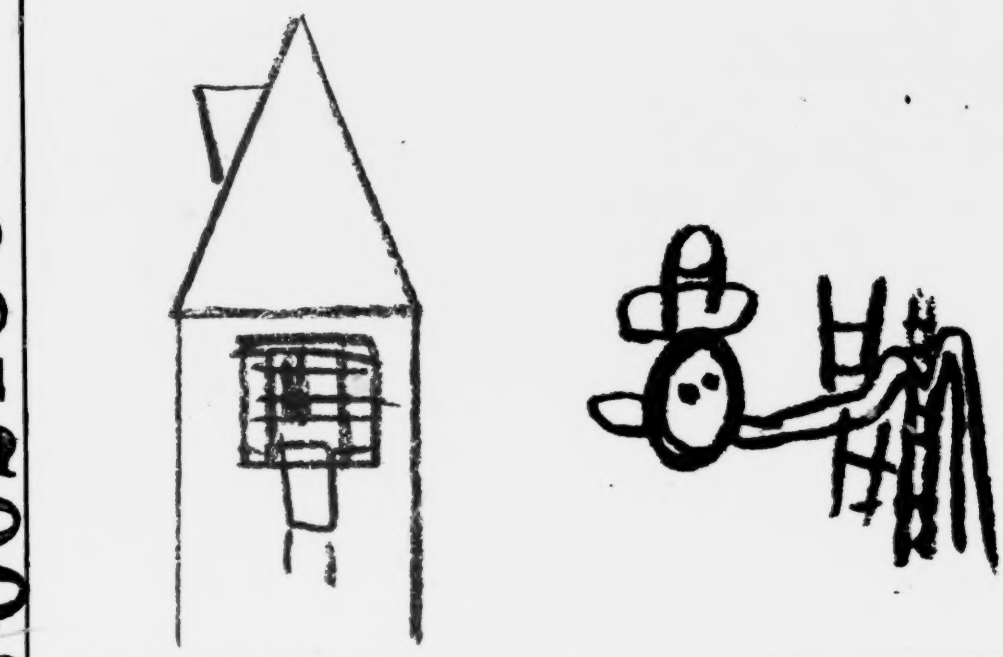

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Martin Haberman and Blanche Persky
Editors

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National Commission on Teacher Education and
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This report reflects the views of the foregoing persons as individuals, not as spokesmen for the organizations noted.

The editors of this report were responsible for interpreting the will of the Committee, and this they did with unanimous agreement by the Committee on the results of that interpretation.

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PREFACE

In the spring of 1967, the Association for Childhood Education International, the NEA Department of Elementary-Kindergarten-Nursery Education, and the NEA National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards invited seven other national organizations to join them in sponsoring a committee to study the preparation of nursery and kindergarten teachers -- the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the American Home Economics Association, the Association for Student Teaching, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, the National Kindergarten Association, and Project Head Start.

At that time, the initiation of many new programs for preschool youngsters had created an unprecedented and continuing demand for personnel in early childhood education. The sponsoring groups therefore charged the Ad Hoc Joint Committee on the Preparation of Nursery and Kindergarten Teachers to explore the issues and problems faced by the education profession in providing enough competent personnel to meet that demand and to make recommendations for their preparation.

The present product of the Committee's work should help school, college and university, state department of education, and association people to

develop policy and programs for the training of professionals and paraprofessionals to staff early childhood education, this to include their certification and licensure. The Committee has made some provocative proposals, and it is hoped that wide distribution of this report will prompt lively discussion and wise decisions.

Changing patterns of life in our society have caused considerable alteration in both school and family. Even greater changes are in order. The family and the school as we have known them are and should be in transition. Bettleheim's recent report on the *kibbutz* suggests one nation's approach to caring for and educating the young. Our nation needs to formulate its own plan. Nursery and kindergarten programs of new and creative proportions, suggested in this report, may be only the beginning of what we must do.

How parents and teachers together can provide a challenging, exciting, supportive educational environment for little people is yet to be determined. Finding and preparing qualified personnel is one of the first steps. We hope this will prompt other action to probe the ways in which society can deal most effectively and humanistically with our children.

Roy A. Edelfelt
Executive Secretary
NEA National Commission on Teacher Education
and Professional Standards

Washington, D. C.
June 1969

INTRODUCTION

This report contains recommendations for consideration by public and private agencies and institutions concerned with the preparation, certification and licensure,[1] and employment of educational personnel to work with young children. Among them are the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and its respective bureaus, state departments of education, colleges and universities, professional associations, day care agencies, and local school systems.

The major points of this paper are:

1. The vulnerability of young children necessitates quality educational programs for them; "something" is not necessarily better than nothing.

2. The team approach to instruction is vital to the operation of programs for young children and should be covered in the preparation of personnel.

3. Teachers and other personnel involved in the education of young children should be evaluated on

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[1]The terms *certification* and *licensure* are used herein in reference to two different categories of personnel -- professionals and paraprofessionals, respectively.

the basis of competence and suitability of personality as well as by usual procedures.

4. A system of evaluating their competence should involve teams of capable, experienced individuals drawn from faculties, professional organizations, state departments of education, and community agencies.

5. College faculty should be hired on the basis of behavioral competencies and experience. Lack of the doctorate should not be used as an obstacle to bringing able people onto college faculties.

6. The concept of the career ladder, or upward professional mobility, should be made a legitimate part of professional education and certification or licensure.

7. Specific examples of educational personnel actually functioning to reach desirable goals can be identified and described.

I. THE CONTEXT

WHY DO WE NEED PERSONNEL FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

Continuous Development of Human Beings

> ...the day will soon come when all young children will have the chance to begin their schooling in "first grades" and the first grade will be for three-year-olds. Fours will go to second grade, five-year-olds to third grade.
>
> Gone will be the special names: nursery school, kindergarten, day care....[2]

This Committee goes even further than Hymes in the conviction that the process of education begins at birth. Only the exigencies of practical considerations force us to compromise and begin the process of schooling at the magic age of three. Evidence is mounting that even this may be too late for some teaching to be effective. It should be noted that we are not advocating institutional experiences for all young children; at the same time, group experiences for children under three are being carefully studied and evaluated throughout

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[2]Hymes, James L. Jr. *Teaching the Child Under Six*. Columbus, Ohio: Merrill and Co., 1968. Preface.

the country and should not be ignored in our consideration of the total educational experience.

At present, there are many points of view on the goals of early education: some emphasize preparing youngsters for reading and academic success; some stress broader cognitive and intellectual development; others emphasize individualistic expression or social adjustment. Such delimitation does not imply that these goals are mutually exclusive. The Committee believes that overemphasis on one or two, to the exclusion of others, defeats the purpose of continuous and full development of the individual.

Regardless of the discipline of the scholar, whether he is theologian, physician, psychologist, sociologist, biologist, artist, or educator, the significance of the early years on subsequent development is supported by all forms of research, theory, and experiential evidence. But while there is increasing agreement about the critical nature of early experience, this agreement gets translated into diverse and frequently conflicting programs. The potential for damage as well as for education in early stages of development makes it imperative that program distortions which overemphasize one aspect of growth while ignoring other equally important aspects must be prevented.

Our conviction that all youngsters can benefit from sound educational programs during their early years should not be construed to mean that we advocate compromising the quality of programs in order to achieve quantity. In a forced-choice situation, we would prefer no program to one which may be damaging to children. The physical environment in which a child lives for part of his day,

the intellectual stimulation he receives, the opportunities for him to develop a healthy personality and to acquire social competence are essential aspects of a program which we would support. Lack of consideration for any of these elements would be a significant deficiency.

There is no dichotomy between the development of social skills and the development of intellectual skills in young children. Social skills are most effectively developed when the focus is on the accomplishment of an intellectually stimulating task. Such tasks are not adult-imposed, although adults plan and provide them. The tasks should have the potentiality for helping children conceive of themselves as people who can solve problems, gain information, learn skills, and relate to other people. The rewards are in feelings of accomplishment. In such programs, social and intellectual differences are appreciated and the children become aware of their own capacities to learn.

Implementing these criteria and translating them into practice do not happen without careful planning. The current social and economic pressures to launch crisis programs should not force us to overlook the danger of exposing children to random experiences. We do not recommend starting a program until competent staff and adequate facilities can be provided. When planning cannot feasibly precede the offering of a program but must be concurrent, it should be legitimized with resources. Ample time and financial support must be provided in order to take advantage of the knowledge and expertise of competent early childhood consultants. Such concurrent planning becomes continuous evaluation and enables a program to remain relevant and responsive to children.

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Impact of Early Childhood Education

All children, regardless of their social and economic background, should have the opportunity for sound educational experiences during their formative years. To achieve this objective will be a Herculean task. There are now approximately 20 million children under five years old. In 1975 there will be approximately 25 million, and by 1980, 28 million.

If present trends continue, one-third of the three- to five-year-olds will be in school by 1970 and possibly 40 percent of them in school by 1975. (One-fourth of them are in school today.) If public kindergarten is made compulsory and if voluntary programs are provided for three- and four-year-olds, the school enrollment of three- to five-year-olds will increase by over 5 million by 1975.

The Need for Staff

Our concern is the obvious need for competent staff. Confronted by a predictable and speedy acceleration in the demand for teachers for tomorrow, few states have enough specially prepared teachers for today's needs in early childhood education. Only 1,200 teachers prepared to work at the early childhood ("preschool") level were graduated from American colleges in 1968. Few states have training programs for paraprofessionals in this field. Few states have certification requirements for "preschool" personnel. In 1967, only six states had special certificates for nursery school and kindergarten teachers and only five had a special endorsement on elementary certificates.[3]

The Need for Leadership Personnel

There is a lack of skilled and knowledgeable persons who are competent in early childhood education and who have leadership and supervisory skills. Such people are essential for (a) college teaching, (b) on-the-job supervision in such roles as agency director, and (c) consultative service to school systems, communities, and early childhood centers. Individuals are needed to guide the staff in initial planning, to help to establish criteria for facilities, to design and implement the programs, and to conduct ongoing education of all levels of staff.

The problem of teacher preparation for nursery school and kindergarten is thus an urgent one. Most states will soon be considering the certification and licensure of professionals and paraprofessionals in early childhood education. Many colleges will be initiating courses leading to undergraduate and graduate degrees for teachers of "preschool" children. *But before curriculums and certification and licensing regulations can be established, the competencies required by teachers and others who work with the very young must be determined and stated.* Such determination can only follow an agreed-upon goal for early childhood education and is the prime responsibility of the institution. In addition to the goal and to the competencies required to attain it, the cur-

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[3]Stinnett, T. M. *A Manual on Certification Requirements for School Personnel in the United States*. 1967 Edition. Washington, D. C.: National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards, National Education Association, 1967. Chapter 2, pp. 85-174.

riculum and means for teaching and evaluating the behavioral competencies must be developed.

The items suggested below as examples of functioning are illustrations and are intended to be neither inclusive nor mutually exclusive. Depending on the background and competence of individual adults, some of these responsibilities may be shared by professionals and paraprofessionals.

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONING CONSISTENT WITH DESIRABLE GOALS

A. Independence

1. Arranges materials so that they are accessible to children without adult assistance.

2. Gives assistance when needed but does not intervene unnecessarily in situations such as dressing and undressing, clean-up, eating and serving food.

3. Selects and uses equipment that children can operate independently.

4. Arranges furniture and materials so that children work independently as well as in groups.

5. Does not interrupt a child who is occupied constructively.

6. Follows procedures that encourage children to meet their physiological needs without direct supervision (e.g., toilet, washing, etc.).

B. Positive Self-Image

1. Takes time to listen to children.

2. Responds to children's questions.

3. Gives praise freely when justified.

4. Sets up activities which stimulate differentiated individual responses.

5. Receives parents with warmth and respect.

C. Intellectual Stimulation

1. Asks questions which provoke thoughtful response and problem-solving (e.g., comparing, contrasting, analyzing, summarizing, imagining, feeling).

2. Uses daily-life experiences and materials to develop concepts (e.g., relates learning to immediate environment: mathematics concepts by use of familiar objects, science concepts through natural and physical materials).

3. Introduces a wide variety of learning resources (e.g., books, people, objects, media).

4. Responds to children's questions, suggestions, and comments in ways which demonstrate that he is knowledgeable.

D. Creativity

1. Accepts and appreciates divergent and unexpected responses.

2. Provides materials and encourages children to use them in individualistic rather than in prescribed ways.

3. Reads and accepts imaginative stories.

4. Uses music, dance, and other arts to encourage individual responses.

E. Socialization

1. Provides activities that stimulate interaction of children with each other and with adults in a variety of roles.

2. Finds ways to involve isolates in group activities without using pressure or being directive.

3. Uses materials that require interaction of more than one child (e.g., "telephone," games, puzzles).

4. Helps children to discover and use positive ways of interacting without resorting to aggression (e.g., to use words and reason rather than violence).

5. Provides activities which meet individual needs for privacy and independence.

F. Physical Development

1. Provides food and rest as needed.

2. Conducts an appropriately balanced program that allows for both vigorous and quiet activities.

3. Provides for appropriate room temperature, ventilation, and seating.

4. Plans for and uses outdoor facilities when feasible.

5. Secures medical and dental examinations and treatment for children as needed.

G. Emotional Development

1. Comforts children who are upset.

2. Allows for emotional conflict and deals with conflict situations without being judgmental.

3. Models healthy responses (e.g., uses humor in responding to children, maintains self-control, relates positively to other adults, accepts own mistakes with realization of human frailty).

4. Copes with emergencies without panic.

5. Varies expectations for children on the basis of knowledge of tensions in their out-of-school situations.

H. Staff Collaboration and Cooperation

1. Identifies classroom responsibilities appropriate for individual staff members.

2. Demonstrates willingness to delegate or assume responsibilities identified.

3. Sets goals and evaluative processes for assessing progress toward them.

II. SOME PROPOSALS

HOW CAN WE ASSURE PROGRAM QUALITY AND STILL MEET THE SHORTAGE OF PERSONNEL?

Selection of Personnel: Who Shall Teach?

Any educational program for young children implies the need for staff that can perform in a variety of functional roles. These include supervision, administration, and evaluation; teaching; working with families and communities; and working with specialists in related disciplines.

The fulfillment of these functions can be achieved by individuals with varying degrees of skill and training. There is a role for the highly trained specialist and an equally significant one for the relatively untrained paraprofessional or volunteer. These adults must function as a team, each perceiving and understanding his flexible roles and relationships. This requires continuous supervision and learning for all members of the team.

A staff that is provided with such supervision and opportunities for learning can be recruited from certified personnel, members of the community (including parents, teachers prepared to teach at other levels, and individuals trained in other disciplines), and young people interested in exploring a career in early childhood education.

There should be no barriers of sex or age. In all cases it is assumed that we would be seeking individuals whose emotional and physical health is appropriate for working with young children.

Educational Programs for Personnel at Different Levels

It should be a function of higher education institutions to develop preparatory programs and to encourage individuals to pursue degrees in early childhood education. These programs should be innovative, focusing on the realities of the leadership and training function as well as on theory and background understandings.

The components of a sound educational program for adults include preparation for the various levels of responsibility (e.g., aides, assistants, group teachers, administrators, social workers) and implementation of the principle of individualization which capitalizes on adults' talents and life experiences. A reality-based program has its locus in direct experiences with children and with colleagues, community representatives, and agencies with whom the prospective professional will be expected to work.

Criteria for enrollment in programs should be sufficiently flexible so that previously established paper credentials are not the sole determinant. Prime consideration should be given to (a) evidence of emotional and physical health, (b) the ability to communicate, and (c) sufficient literacy to assure the likelihood of intellectual growth. Applicants' educational backgrounds (i.e., "highest level of schooling completed") should not be a rigid criterion of enrollment in programs;

potentiality is more critical than prior achievement.

There should be provision for persons at the lower professional levels who demonstrate potential to get on-site as well as formal education that will enable them to move upward on the career ladder. Such training might be provided by (a) colleges and universities, (b) professional organizations, (c) school systems, and (d) a corps of educators and consultants, to be described below. Ideally, there should be cooperation and collaboration among all four of these groups. It is assumed that the training programs will capitalize on the availability of such resources as films, filmstrips, teaching guides, simulated practice, and other media of teaching.

Guide to Essential Components of Preparation

1. Preparation of all personnel should include involvement with children and parents of diverse values and background in a variety of situations.

2. The program should help trainees understand themselves, their strengths and weaknesses, and their attitudes in order to relate effectively to children and parents.

3. The program should encourage individuals to be receptive to new ideas and should stimulate and capitalize on their eagerness to learn.

4. In order to provide for and sustain the intellectual curiousity of young children, teachers and others need to know a great deal in a wide variety of subject matters. Depending on the level

of responsibility for which an individual is being prepared, the program should provide for continuous study in the arts and sciences. It is assumed that this component of the professional program will be achieved under the auspices of a recognized institution. There should also be opportunity for wide choice and individual advisement.

5. In addition to providing for specialists to represent the arts and sciences, the program must provide for the in-depth professional education of those persons preparing to become specialists in the field of early childhood education as a major discipline.

6. Every trainee should have some opportunity to learn more about and to teach those things in which he has a vital interest. At the same time, he should be gaining the knowledge needed to help children pursue *their* particular talents and interests.

7. Programs which prepare people to teach young children must emphasize the characteristics, growth patterns, and learning styles of young children and the diverse styles of behavior of mothers.

8. Programs should include opportunities to work with community people and agencies. In addition to serving as resource people, knowledgeable community representatives should be involved in planning programs.

9. Preparation should include learning the roles and potential contributions of professional associations and labor groups.

10. Teaching personnel will in the future be working as parts of teams. Their training, therefore, should give them experiences in cooperative effort so that they can develop the human relations skills which will enable them to work effectively with other professionals and paraprofessionals. Teaching teams should be prepared together as teams in order to make their role definition an integral part of the training program *and* subsequent practice.

11. Programs should provide for preparation at all levels of classroom responsibility. They should also be designed to make it possible for individuals to enter at the paraprofessional level and move upward to any level of professional responsibility, depending on interest, experience, preparation, and ability.

12. Direct contact with the homes of his pupils should be part of each prospective teacher's experience.

13. Programs should provide the opportunity for students to become independent, self-directed persons who can substantiate and articulate their beliefs about the education of young children.

The above recommendations are intended to provide flexibility and new avenues by which individuals may enter the various levels of professional responsibility. It is recognized that such practices are "experimental"; at the same time, it is hoped that they will prove fruitful in the achievement of a dual objective -- to encourage persons with potential to enter and to succeed in the teaching profession, and to alleviate the shortage of personnel who work with young children.

Responsibility for Preparation

The preparation of personnel for early childhood education must be a genuinely joint effort among local school systems, community groups, state agencies, and college faculties. *No single institution should bear full responsibility or control.*

Colleges and universities should have major responsibility for the preparation of the "trainers of trainers." However, in areas where there is no institution willing and able to take this responsibility, it should be undertaken by professional organizations, state departments of education, or local school districts, using qualified consultants. The qualifications of such consultants should include (a) considerable recognized success in working with young children, (b) demonstrated leadership ability in working with adults and in coordinating their services in the interest of children, and (c) familiarity with current practices, developments, and research in the field of early childhood education.

Colleges and universities should be encouraged to be more flexible about the criteria used for selecting early childhood education faculty, to be practical and realistic in implementing their programs, and to make intensified efforts to prepare more leaders in early childhood education. This could be accomplished in several ways, for example:

1. Giving equivalencies and recognition for achievements other than the doctorate to persons with successful experience in childhood education who have the abilities needed for preparing teachers and other personnel.

2. Requiring college staff to spend part time in some form of direct involvement with preschool children in settings that are community-based.

The preparation of personnel should be done in programs which require interactions with various institutions, community groups, school systems, state and city departments of education, and any agency concerned with children.

III. THE FUNCTION OF CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR EVALUATING COMPETENCE?

It is impossible to suggest widespread changes in teacher preparation without also considering certification requirements. The concept of teacher certification is in a state of flux. There is a growing trend among the states toward reviewing existing regulations for all educational personnel and for improving and "liberalizing" standards and procedures. The Committee believes that the following ideas should be given serious study by all persons who are working on requirements for personnel in early childhood education.

At all levels of teaching, certification should depend on demonstrated competence. State agencies, in cooperation with professional organizations and college faculties, should establish criteria and procedures for evaluating competence. Evaluation teams using guidelines and criteria similar to those used by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) should be established with local and national representatives. Such evaluation teams might be comprised of (a) college faculty with early childhood specialization; (b) a representative of the state department of education; (c) a teacher of young children who is also a representative of a national professional organization in the field of early childhood

education; (d) a representative of an allied field of specialization, e.g., social work, psychology, pediatrics, home economics; (e) a community action representative with experience in early childhood education.

Able people should not be discouraged from entering or staying in teaching because of certification requirements as they are often stated today. Requirements for entry level, regardless of the position, should be sufficiently flexible for persons who have limited training or experience to begin working with children and to pursue the requirements of training and competence needed to qualify for advancement within the profession.

Preservice Preparation

In order to meet this immediate shortage *and* to insure quality, there should be more than one route to certification or licensure for different levels of responsibility, i.e., for specialist, master teacher, paraprofessional, etc. For example:

1. *A state-approved college program, with the college recommending the applicant.* This assumes that the college program has included direct experiences with children in high-quality, supervised situations. Teacher certification by college recommendation should be provisional; full certification should follow demonstrated competence.

2. *Demonstrated on-the-job competence by persons already employed in an early childhood education program who may or may not have taken courses or completed degrees.* Means should be found to equate the competence of such persons with that of graduates of approved programs and of in-service teach-

ers. This kind of approach should be so structured that standards of the profession are not lowered but improved by being evaluated in terms of defined goals. It is recommended that the state departments of education help to clarify and then publish these specifications for certification and licensure, recognizing that they will be continuously evaluated and revised.

There should be increased emphasis on reciprocity agreements to provide for the mobility of teachers. State agencies should seek the cooperation of other professional agencies and institutions in establishing and enforcing standards. The *total* profession should be responsible for certification.

In-service Education

Recognizing that an approved program will not always be available for teachers with minimal training and competence, state agencies should seek the cooperation of colleges and professional associations in designing new approaches to teacher education through in-service training, with a variety of experiences and a broad base of resources for trainers.

Teacher education institutions need to recognize as one of their functions the continued, on-the-job supervision of graduates during their first year of teaching. This should be considered a necessary continuum rather than an addendum to preservice education. Colleges and universities should also cooperate with school systems in the continuous supervision and guidance of beginning teachers, regardless of where the teachers earned their degrees or whether they currently are

matriculated. This is school-university collaboration.

The completion of an in-service program should be accepted as a desirable route to certification, provided the applicant meets the established level of competence. Unless such means are established, many able people will never be certified, regardless of their competence.

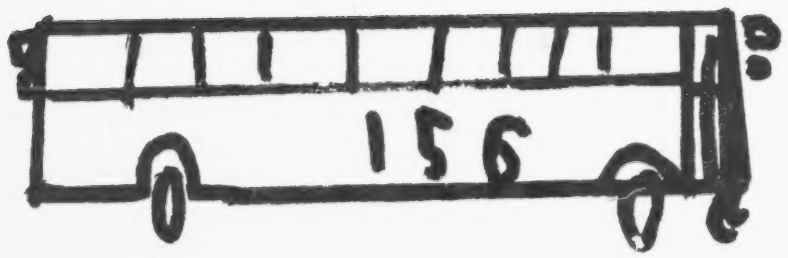
State agencies should recognize different levels of performance and different job responsibilities which are possible and desirable within early childhood education and should establish the necessary requirements for the licensure or certification of aides, assistants, teacher interns, and others. Licensure and certification would then become a continuum whereby beginners could move on to more advanced levels through new kinds of training.

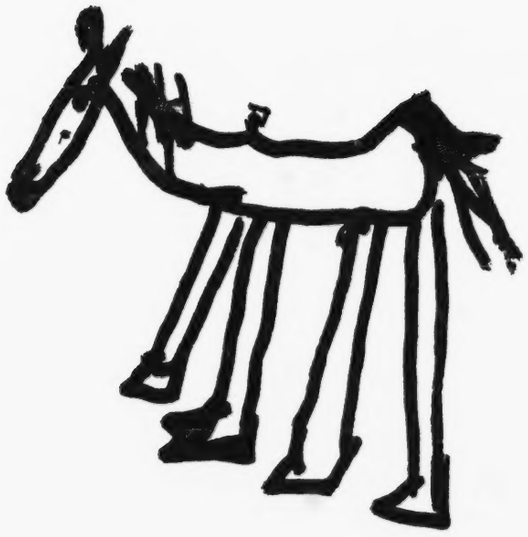
Teachers' certificates should not be renewed unless there is evidence of professional growth through a variety of acceptable kinds of in-service experiences. This would be important for all teachers, whether certified by the approved-program approach or on the basis of competence.

Selection should be continuous, on all levels, throughout the period of preparation, with opportunities for redirecting candidates who prove unsuitable. The initial screening of candidates should be flexible and should not be based on arbitrary criteria (e.g., an absolute cut-off point on a standardized test), on irrelevant criteria (e.g., a period of residence in the state), or on criteria common in undergraduate colleges (e.g., a speech test) which are not necessarily applicable

to the populations of adults capable of entering the field of early childhood education.

The Committee believes that certification or licensure cannot be based solely on the number of credits collected. We hope that states will move quickly in the direction of evaluation of competence as the basis for initial certification or licensure and for subsequent professional advancement at all levels of education, not only in early childhood education.





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